

This is a demand of the American people. Sixty-nine percent of the American people, now, today, believe that we should leave Iraq. That is a gradual increase. I believe that Americans are patriots. They never cut and run. They will stand and defend their Nation.

But we have an obligation, as Members of Congress holding the purse strings, to never frivolously send our soldiers into battle. We have an obligation, as the emergency supplemental has done, to provide post-traumatic stress dollars, prosthetics, mental health needs, improving Walter Reed, helping military families, and, yes, helping children have universal access to health care.

We have a crisis in Iraq. It is a crisis made by the continuing failed policies of this administration.

Wake up. We owe a moral commitment to the soldiers on the battlefield.

I am proud to have made that vote. I will make it again. And, frankly, I am concerned that when the olive branch of conciliation has been extended to this administration to come up with a real resolution to solve this war, we get a blank check from them, or at least no response.

And so I ask my colleagues to stay the course on behalf of the American people and the patriots who are on the front line of Iraq. We owe them our duty to provide for them the right kind of road map.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

IN RECOGNITION OF THE LIFE OF ANDREW BURRIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, tonight I rise to commemorate the life of Andrew Burris, a professional carpenter by trade, who gave his life today in Toledo, Ohio, as he helped place the finishing touches on the largest Federal transportation project in Ohio's history. Burris suffered fatal injury as he worked to complete Interstate 280's new river crossing known as the Veterans Glass City Skyway that spans the Maumee River, the largest river flowing into the Great Lakes.

At approximately 9:15 this morning, 36-year-old Andrew W. Burris, of Curtice, Ohio, fell to his death from a scaffolding on the north side of the bridge. He was a faithful and dedicated member of the Carpenters Union Local 1138. As a carpenter for nearly 10 years, his union brothers said Andrew loved his work and was an excellent carpenter.

The new skyway replaces the last drawbridge left on our Nation's inter-

state system. The cable-stayed bridge will carry three lanes of traffic in each direction over the river extending from I-75 on the north end to Navarre Avenue on the south end. The surface of the roadway will reach about 130 feet above the center of the river.

As our Nation builds forward, brick by brick, steel rod by steel rod, cement block by cement block, wood beam by wood beam, sometimes we forget the danger faced by the men and women skilled in these trades as they craft our monuments to civilization. It takes a tragedy like this to give us pause and say a silent prayer for all workers in their daily arduous labor.

Andrew's death is not the first tragedy to befall the workers on this new highway in the sky. On President's Day, 2004, a crane collapse on the Maumee River Crossing Bridge led to the death of four iron workers. This bridge to the future these men and women have been building is a monument and a testament to their work.

In the RECORD entry I offered following the death of those four iron workers on that fateful February day, I noted the men and women building the bridge had been about great deeds. We watch their incredible feats daily with admiration and, yes, with awe. We witness their minds, their muscles and hands forming of the Earth a new and better future for us all.

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On the hottest summer days, as well as bone-chilling, subzero temperatures of winter in the north, they toiled fearlessly above us creating a majestic expression of who they were and who we are as a people.

We humbly acknowledge and publicly recognize them for their heroic, steadfast, and artful deeds as building tradesmen. The men who lost their lives leave not only their mastery of iron and concrete and steel and the creation of beauty from it as their legacy, but more importantly, they leave cherished lives and families.

The same is true of Andrew Burris. Though his life was cut short, he leaves a legacy in the bridge he helped create and in all that his carpenter's hands produced. Emily Dickinson's poem "In This Short Life" tells us:

"In this short life
That lasts an hour
How much—how little—is
Within our power."

And as we live our lives, all are affected by tragedy, some small and some great. It is the trials and tragedies of life which make us stronger and make the joys of life so much sweeter. I know this lesson of life does not decrease the sadness and pain felt by all those who knew and loved Andrew Burris. Our entire community offers its sympathy to those who called him father, husband, son, brother, friend, colleague. We celebrate him in recalling the words in "A Song of Life" by Ella Wheeler Wilcox:

"In the rapture of life and of living,

I lift up my head and rejoice,
And I thank the great Giver for giving.

The soul of my gladness a voice.
I lift up my eyes to Apollo,
The god of the beautiful days
And my spirit soars off like a swallow

low
And is lost in the light of its rays.
Come out of the world—come above it—

Up over its crosses and graves,
Though the green Earth is fair and I love it,

We must love it as masters, not slaves.

Come up where the dust never rises—
But only the perfume of flowers—

And your life shall be glad with surprises
Of beautiful hours.

Come up where the rare golden wine is
Apollo distills in my sight,

And your life shall be happy as mine is,
And as full of delight."

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PAUL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

STATUS OF THE SIX FOR '06 AGENDA: ZERO FOR SIX

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, the Democrat majority has been in control of this House now for about 4 months, and they made a lot of commitments to the American people during the campaign just passed. And I thought tonight I would give a report on the success of their agenda.

They had six bills that they said they wanted to pass in the first 100 days or first 100 hours to get moving, and I would like to go through those bills one at a time:

H.R. 1, the first bill they introduced, Implementing the 9/11 Commission Recommendations Act of 2007 is stalled.

The Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007 is stalled.

The Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2007, stalled.

H.R. 4, the Medicare Prescription Drug Price Negotiation Act of 2007, stalled.

H.R. 5, the College Student Relief Act of 2007, stalled.

And the CLEAN Energy Act of 2007, still stalled.

They have control of both Houses of the Congress, and these bills have not yet reached the President's desk, although they pledged to get these things done as quickly as possible after the election.

They have passed only 17 bills into law. Ten of those bills named Federal post offices and Federal buildings. None of the legislative impact on fighting the war against Islamic extremists, balancing the Federal budget, creating jobs, cutting pork barrel spending, or saving Social Security have been addressed or passed.

They have passed a budget. And the budget that they passed assumes that the President's tax cuts, which we passed early in the Bush administration that led to our economic recovery and low interest rates and low unemployment and low inflation, they want to do away with those tax cuts. And that, in effect, will amount to a \$392.5 billion additional tax burden on the American people.

The Democrats' budget also includes an immediate \$24 billion increase in nondefense, nonsecurity spending above the President's request. This is on top of the \$23 billion of unrequested spending in the supplemental and \$6 billion in the omnibus spending bill.

In addition, the Democrat budget includes 12 reserve funds, promising more than \$115 billion in higher spending, which, if offset as required by the House rules, would almost surely mean another \$115 billion in higher taxes. This would be on top of the \$392.5 billion in tax increases they have already built into their revenue numbers.

The average taxpayer in Indiana, if this budget were to pass, would be saddled with \$2,729 in additional taxes and more than 2.3 million Hoosiers would be affected just this year under the Democrat budget.

Now, I want to talk a little bit about the Democrat Iraq supplemental. That was for the defense of this country and for supplementing our troops and giving them the equipment and the support that they need to fight the war in Iraq and to fight around the world in places like the Balkans and in Afghanistan. The Democrat supplemental legislates defeat and funds favors at the troops' expense.

Let me just tell you what is in this bill. It is supposed to be for our troops and for the defense of the Nation. But in that bill they have added \$120 million for the shrimp industry, which has nothing to do with defense; \$74 million to store peanuts, which has nothing to do with defense; \$25 million for growing spinach, which has nothing to do with defense; and \$5 million for "aquaculture," or to put it in a less fancy term, it is tropical fish. Five million dollars for research on tropical fish. These are things that shouldn't be in the defense supplemental, and yet my colleagues on the other side of the aisle put them in that bill.

I think the American people need to know that while they made these commitments during the campaign, they have not fulfilled those commitments. And this is a report card on the first 4 months of their reign in this House. I will try to, in every 3- or 4-month period, give another report on the

progress of the Democrats' agenda, and I hope it is a lot better than this one has been.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CONAWAY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE HORRIFIC TRAGEDY AT VIRGINIA TECH AND THE CALL FOR SENSIBLE GUN CONTROL LEGISLATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, the horrific events at Virginia Tech just a few days ago cause all of us to reflect. My heart goes out to the victims, to the victims' families, to the people who were injured. This is something that is just a terrible tragedy, an unthinkable, terrible tragedy. And as the father of three, including two in college, it really makes one stop and pause.

I say very, very respectfully, at a time of violence we need to reflect on this violence. And it certainly seems to me that upon reflection, to say that this country needs to have sensible gun control legislation, not legislation that would take guns out of the hands of people legitimately who have the right by the second amendment to own guns; but how could a deranged young man like the killer be able to just walk into a store and purchase any kind of guns at will and then use them to mow down 32 or 33 people?

It is all a matter of commonsense. We get emotional about these issues, but I am really speaking from the heart. Commonsense says that we need to have sensible gun control legislation so that criminals, people with mental illness, cannot just purchase guns at will and as many as they want.

In my home city, New York City, our mayor, Michael Bloomberg, has been leading a crusade for sensible gun control legislation, and I agree with him. And, again, it takes a tragedy of this magnitude to kind of just sit and reflect and say, what are we doing or what are we not doing and why is it an infringement on anybody's second amendment rights to keep guns out of the hands of criminals, deranged people, and people who shouldn't own them?

I think that this country really, really needs to reflect on its policies regarding guns. And, again, I support the second amendment, and I think there are many, many legitimate reasons for people to own guns. But after the tragedy at Virginia Tech, I say it again: I believe more than ever that this country needs to adopt sensible gun control legislation. We need to use our commonsense, and we need to try to pre-

vent tragedies like the tragedy at Virginia Tech from happening again.

I know people say guns don't kill people, people kill people; that is true. But guns in the hands of the wrong people kill people. And I really think in all good conscience that we really need to reflect.

And, again, my heart goes out to the families, the victims, and all the students at Virginia Tech. But as a country, we need to come to grips with this problem.

THE ACCOUNTABILITY CONGRESS: THE 110TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, tonight I would like to welcome you, Mr. Speaker, and the American people to the Accountability Congress. Over the next 1 hour, my freshman colleagues and I will be claiming this hour to talk about the accomplishments of this 110th Congress.

We have seen not only an auspicious and bold, brave, new agenda for the first 100 hours, but also the first 100 days. And we are not just going to talk about and celebrate the accomplishments of the last 100 days. We are going to talk about a vision for our country and talk about what will happen in the days to come.

It is important, Mr. Speaker, that the American people know that by getting a new majority in the Congress that they have signed up to get a vision that is inclusive, that brings Americans all together, that makes for a safer America, a fairer economy, that makes for an economy where working people, middle-class people can strive and do well in our society.

And joining me tonight with the members of the freshman class are a host of tremendously brave and tremendously intelligent, capable leaders who are aiding not only in charting a new course for our country, but who in this very 110th Congress, Mr. Speaker, are fully engaged from the very top. The leadership has engaged our talents, our skills, our ability, and we have been proud to be able to help this 110th Congress be a stronger, better place.

And tonight I am going to be anchoring the one hour, but I am not going to hang on to it long. I think the American people want to hear from the brilliance that this 110th Congress class has to offer. So in the very beginning, I am just going to pass it right off to Mr. HODES, who is the president of our class.

I yield to Congressman HODES.

Mr. HODES. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) for yielding.

Mr. Speaker and distinguished colleagues, I am glad to be with you tonight to talk about where we have been